

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : ETRD, US, UR

SUBJECT : BDG REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON TRACTOR PRICES

1. THE BANGLADESH SUGAR AND FOOD INDUSTRIES CORPORATION (BSFIC) HAS BEEN BUYING FARM TRACTORS (AND TRAILERS FOR CARRYING SUGAR CANE) REGULARLY FROM THE SOVIET UNION UNDER BARTER AND AID ARRANGEMENTS. BSFIC IS OBTAINING 125 SOVIET TRACTORS UNDER THE 1976 BARTER AGREEMENT AND EXPECTS TO IMPORT 200 IN CY 1977. HOWEVER, PRICING PROBLEMS HAVE ARISEN, ACCORDING TO BSFIC DIRECTOR (COMMERCIAL), TO A POINT WHERE BSFIC WOULD LIKE TO CONSIDER OTHER POSSIBLE SOURCES. ECON OFF MET WITH THE DIRECTOR JANUARY 25.

2. THE PRICE OF THE SOVIET BEYLORUS, MODEL 6M (50 HP) TRACTORS HAS RISEN SHARPLY IN THE PAST THREE YEARS FROM POUNDS STERLING 900 IN 1975 TO A NEGOTIATED 2,000 IN 1976 AND THE SOVIETS ARE ASKING 4,500 (C AND F CHITTAGONG) IN 1977, DIRECTOR (COMMERCIAL) TELLS US. IN EXPLAINING THESE INCREASES, THE SOVIETS TELL BSFIC OFFICIALS INTER ALIA THAT THE US, AS WELL AS CANADA AND INDIA, ARE BUYING LARGE QUANTITIES OF THESE TRACTORS AND THIS INCREASED DEMAND HAS RAISED THE PRICE.

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3. BSFIC DIRECTOR HAS ASKED US (A) IF US IMPORTS OF SOVIET FARM TRACTORS HAVE, IN FACT, SHOWN A SHARP INCREASE IN 1975 AND 1976; AND (B) THE APPROXIMATE C AND F COST, CHITTAGONG OF COMPARABLE US TRACTORS.

4. COMMENT: BSFIC IS NOT LIKELY TO BE ABLE TO OBTAIN CASH FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO BUY US TRACTORS, GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY

TO IMPORT SOVIET TRACTORS UNDER BARTER, AND THUS ANY RESPONSE
COMMERCE DEPT CAN PROVIDE WILL IN ALL PROBABILITY MERELY
HELP BSFIC NEGOTIATE WITH THE SOVIETS, RATHER THAN LEAD TO
A SALE OF US TRACTORS. NEVERTHELESS, ON THE ASSUMPTION THE
INFORMATION REQUESTED IS READILY AVAILABLE, AND GIVEN SOME
SLIM CHANCE OF AN EVENTUAL US EXPORT SALE, WE RECOMMEND A
PROMPT RESPONSE TO THIS INQUIRY.
MASTERS

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